

“Ridin’ for the Brand” looks beyond cowboy myth

Ten years in the making, Montana filmmaker Stephanie Alton’s new documentary, “Ridin’ for the Brand,” has earned its place among the most compelling and important documentaries about ranching in Montana.

The film offers “a tender and penetrating look at a vanishing way of life,” writes author Richard Wheeler. “Family ranching is besieged on all sides, and Miss Alton’s documentary vividly shows how ranchers struggle, and the rewards and sorrows they experience as change closes in on them.”

“Ridin’ for the Brand” journals a year in the life of three old-time Montana ranching families. Originally coming to the Big Timber area during the early Texas cattle drives over a century ago, these families are struggling to maintain the only life they know and love.

Alton believes the American West has a place in the American psyche and is part of our mythology. Throughout her life she dreamed of places that were wild and free, and for her, the West represents that freedom and hope for new beginnings, just as it did for

the many who came before her.

So, she began her journey to film the lives of people who are part of this land. Originally, she wanted to create a film about the mythology of the American cowboy, and whether or not it was still alive. But as the film evolved, the concern for our food and its sources came to the forefront.

Alton’s film gives a glimpse into the world of ranching and livestock, and the stories and way of life of people who are intimately connected to us, as consumers, through their hard work, care, and hours devoted to the animals that eventually reach our plates.

“Ridin’ for the Brand” is more than a story about ranches of the West; it’s a story of the dedication and steadfastness of ranch families, and the conscious changes people are making in their food choices and agricultural practices.

“‘Ridin’ for the Brand’ is the real



Johnny Hoiland haying on a tractor from “Ridin’ for the Brand.”

deal. Looking beyond the cowboy myth, Alton’s film captures the slog and grind of ranch work, documenting a way of life on the brink of extinction,” writes Livingston author and screenwriter William Hjortsberg.

For more information and screening dates, visit www.ridinforthebrandthemovie.com.



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Find Art Montana

New online directory supports visual artists

A new artist directory, www.findart-montana.com, is now live and supporting visual artists throughout the state. The site is designed specifically to help visitors locate artists, studios and art as they travel in the state and enjoy the local culture.

Jan Shanahan and Kris Kramer, both residents of Whitefish, put the site together. They encourage all Montana artists to become part of the FindArtMontana community.

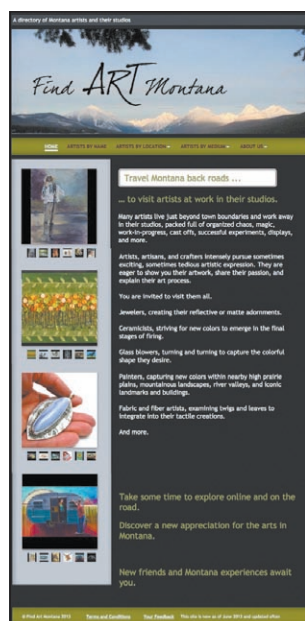
It’s easy to participate by filling out the Artist Information Form located on the About Us page. Take a few moments to complete, attach it to an email, and allow the site to promote your work.

The site owners are adding artists as quickly as possible to create a rich experience for users. The site is already close to the top in searches and will place even higher as the number of links increase.

Each artist’s name appears on Artists-

by-Location and the Artists-by-Medium pages, and then links to the artist’s own profile page. Each profile page includes the artist’s information, a photo of the artist at work, the artist’s logo, and four or five photos of artwork. This page further links to the artist’s own email or website and galleries that represent the artist’s work.

The site strives to help the public locate an artist’s work, so the studio name and his/her gallery locations in the state are noted. There are six geographic areas in Montana located on the site that align with the Montana Office of Tourism maps. Within each



of these areas there are town or area designations with a Google map for directions.

“As the directory grows, it will be a wonderful resource for travelers, visitors, tourists, merchants, gallery owners, art buyers, collectors, and even artists who want to connect with other Montana artists,” say the site’s creators. “The purpose is for all to appreciate art, learn about various creative processes, share, educate and, of course, to sell and purchase artwork.”

Feedback and suggestions on the site are welcome via the site’s About Us page.

Professor Beth Lo (from page 1)

“I have used the image of the child for many years in my work, representing innocence and potential,” said Lo. “I wanted to challenge myself to use other media in this piece, and so included light, motion and sound elements.”

Korea’s Gyeonggi Province has become a mecca of international ceramic development. The biennale event aims to set a new paradigm in developing the world’s contemporary ceramics.

“I felt extremely honored and excited when I found out I was nominated and then selected for the exhibition,” Lo said. “Not only is this a prestigious exhibition to be a part of, but it also gives me an opportunity to see the Ceramics Center in Gyeonggi – some-

times called Disneyland for ceramists – and to travel all over Korea to see traditional ceramics.”

After Korea, Lo will travel to Shanghai for a four-day visit, for which she received a university research grant. She will investigate themes of family and culture in her work as she visits her ancestral home of Wu Zhen, where her family members were famous wok makers.

For more information on the biennale, visit www.kocef.org/eng/03_biennale/2012/01_01.asp. To learn more about Lo’s work, go to bethlo.com.

– from the UM News Service

New Pantages (from page 1)

Sievert, in an interview with television station KRTV, noted, “The best use is always the original use and clearly this was a beautiful theater and it will rise again.”

According to Patty Aaberg, the New Pantages would provide “a flexible performance space downtown that will accommodate not only smaller performances – 300-500 seats – but also recitals, exhibits, receptions and dinners. It makes a full range of events accessible within downtown,” she says.

She believes the new theater would augment the other major downtown venue, the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts. “The civic center theater is a wonderful large venue, but there are many performances that will not be able to fill that space, which makes presenting those performances cost prohibitive,” she notes.

“It’s kind of a perfect marriage of a historic building, a historic theater in that building and then a very functional multi-purpose midsize theater,” Robison told KRTV.

The New Pantages has been set up as a 501c3 nonprofit under the umbrella of the Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art. Organizers need to raise \$1.25 million dollars to build the theater, and also plan to establish an endowment to fund theater operations and a performing arts series.

Donations may be made payable to Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art with a note referencing The New Pantages Theater, 1400 First Avenue North, Great Falls, MT 59401. Receipts for donations will be sent for tax purposes.

Other features of the redevelopment include a 4,000-square foot office space on the second floor, 22 one- and two-bedroom lofts or loft-style apartments, a retail/restaurant space on the ground level, a catering kitchen and multi-size practice rooms.

“We have had a great deal of interest from potential tenants for the Rocky Mountain Building, as well as organizations keen on utilizing the theater,” says Aaberg.

Besides, the restoration resurrects a slice of history, just in time for the town’s centennial next year. “Not a lot of people are aware of the tremendous music history Great Falls has had,” Philip Aaberg told KRTV. “There were jazz clubs ..., the symphony has a great history. There are performing arts groups that have been here forever – dance and theater – and the Pantages presented all of those things.”

For more information, email info@thenewpantage.org or visit thenewpantages.org for more information.

MPAC artist Deadline is Nov. 2

The deadline for artists to apply to the Montana Performing Arts Consortium’s Performing Artists’ Showcase is Nov. 2. The showcase will be held Jan. 25 in Fort Benton as part of MPAC’s Block Booking Conference, Jan. 24-26.

This showcase offers an opportunity for artists to reach presenters who do not attend large national booking conferences. Approximately 18 presenting organizations in Montana and Idaho are expected to attend the conference and showcase.

MPAC emphasizes educational and community residency activities in addition to a community performance. To download guidelines and an artist application, visit mtperformingarts.org.